

[Mrs. Charley Huyck]

[Moss/LM?] 241 - LA [DUP?]

FORM A Circumstances of Interview

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis St., Lincoln

DATE January 24, 1939 SUBJECT American Folklore Stuff

1. Name and address of informant Mrs. Charley Huyck, Route 1
2. Date and time of interview Jan. 17, 1939-7:30 p.m. to 9:45 p.m. Jan. 24, 1939-[7:15?] p.m. to 10:30 p.m.
3. Place of interview Home of informant, Route 1, Lincoln.
4. Name and address of person, if any, who put you in touch with informant None
5. Name and address of person, if any, accompanying you First interview, none, second interview, - Anna Nye Moss-6934 FrancisSt.
6. Description of room, house, surroundings, etc.

Long living room, cheerful, homey, with potted plants in south exposure bay window, furnished with both modern and antique furniture. Includes a high walnut secretary probably 58 years old and a bent back wooden chair over 100 years old. The musical atmosphere predominates, however, piano, five radios, 2 in sight, ukelele, mandolin, 2 guitars, 2 trumpets, 2 violins, one a 105 years old, Marimba phone, large harp, five foot high, phonograph. They play them all. A green parrot occupying a large cage in one corner watched the proceedings but refused to leave the cage or talk through the cage although

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he could have done both. a toy electric train track with a maze of switches and spurs would in and out between the legs of a library [talle?] with a miniature modern stream line train scooting around. C. 15 Neb

The room is a friendly, warm, congenial, somewhat artistic, but in ? no way severe. It makes one, of course, music conscious and the atmosphere certainly reflects the personalities and harmonious relations of its long time occupants.

The house itself is of brick built in a low terrace, with the walk entrance rising by stone steps from the street level and guarded by two stone columns and an iron gate. Yard is enclosed by fence.

House faces the west and looks directly across toward the Nebraska State hospital whose spacious grounds border the paved street on the west. This small suburb was at one time called "Asylum" which name has long since been discarded.

FORM B Personal History of Informant

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis, Lincoln

DATE January 24, 1939 SUBJECT American Folklore Stuff

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Charley Huyck, Route 1, Lincoln

1. Ancestry English-German
2. Place and date of birth Delmar, Iowa, Oct. 20, 1875
3. Family Fathers name, "[W. G.?] Seidell. No children, mother living, father dead. Two brothers, one sister, husband living, 1 adopted boy at home.
4. Places lived with dates

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Delmar, Iowa-1875 to 1880. Rokeby, Nebr.-1880 to 1900 ???? Lincoln, Nebr.-1900 to date.

5. Education, with dates

Rokeby, Nebraska, 1881 to 1889.

6. Occupations and accomplishments, with dates Farm work in field, 1888 to 1900; musician, 1885 to date; home work, 1885 to date; plays piano, mandolin and guitar. Dance caller. Played with her father for dances, public affairs, parties, etc. for 50 years.

7. Special skills and interests

Music, entertainment, farm field and home work, a great home lover.

8. Community and religious activities Christian church, Lincoln (east) Sunday school, very active member. Played for years for community affairs, church, schools, etc.

9. Description of informant Energetic, spontaneous, outdoor girl type, almost suggestive of "tom boy" girlhood.

10. Other points gained in interview Fine regular features, white hair, youthful pink complexion, seems in action and appearance to be twenty years younger than her age. Average height, good body proportions, congenial and has good personality. Seems to fairly radiate health. Has helped raise several children though none of her own and the mother instinct is very marked.

Mrs. Huycks father, U. G. "scovie Seidell" was one of the most noted dance players and callers in the country and was affectionately known as "scovie" by his many friends.

He was a character type to arouse the fondest esteem of all who knew him, small in stature, energetic, with a humorous half grinning expression and possessing great

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magnetism which was felt by all. He loved the life to be found in the atmosphere of these old and new Nebraska dances and virtually lived in a younger environment, staying young along with the thousands for whom he played and called.

He played dances at the State hospital for Insane at Lincoln for 56 years while a dugout pioneer and good farmer of Nebraska, his heart was with the Dance and Musical work always.

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FORM C Text of Interview (Unedited)

NAME OF WORKER Harold J. Moss ADDRESS 6934 Francis St.

DATE January 24, 1939 SUBJECT American Folklore Stuff

NAME AND ADDRESS OF INFORMANT Mrs. Chas. Huyck, Route 1, Lincoln

We spent the first years of our Nebraska life in a dugout 1/2 mile east of Rokeby. It was here we were trapped by snow water, running through the gully, and as the water rose in the room we placed chairs about and carwled over these, to get to the stove. Mother kept a fire going as best she could. The trundle bed in which I slept was almost covered by the water.

As time went on we improved our condition and father began to make money playing for dances and weddings. There were a few traveling musicians who stopped at our place and one of these, an old [man?] taught me to play.

Wedding dances were big events and nearly every wedding was celebrated that way.

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For 50 years and more, I have played at dances all around and in Lincoln, Roca, Saltillo an many times at Malcolm and Woodlawn. My father and I played together, also my brother and others. I started playing when I was so young I used to play with dolls at home. This was about 1888.

We played in many a fine home in Lincoln for their private dances. These were held in the attic or on the third floor of those big houses. Square dances, polka waltzes, schottisches and lancers were the popular dances. We used to haul a parlor organ in the spring wagon as most places

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had no organ or piano at that time. My brother played the bass viol. My father the violin and I played the organ or piano and [sometimes?] the mandolin. for 50 years we played dances at the state hospital (Lincoln) under Dr. Abbott, Dr. Knapp, Dr. Case, Dr. [Coffin?], Dr. Woodard, Dr. Hoy, Dr. Williams, Dr. Griffiths and Dr. Feckner, who is there now.

These dances were held for the patients and hospital staff and are still held every Thursday night. [Pioneer?] Dances

It was the custom to have a big dance in the hayloft whenever a new barn was built. This was a way of dedicating a new barn and they were big affairs. The hayloft would be lighted with lanterns lanterns or hanging lamps and these were pretty gay occasions.

Everybody would climb up the loft ladder, even if they had to crawl over a few horses or cows to get to it. The crowd was always full of life and they sure could dance. There was no snobbery and everyone was friendly, no 'cliquety' people who would keep to themselves.

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The square dance was a very democratic gathering and people dancing in sets were accustomed to mingle with the others rather than just pair off.

Men and boys came dressed in overalls, swallow tail coats, peg-top pants, or tight fitting pants, derby hats; caps, and some wore an assortment which was a sight in itself. The women and girls, wore bustles, some hoop skirts, tight fitting basques and hair ornaments.

These dances had an atmosphere all their own. In one set, sometimes would be an elegantly dressed lady bustle and all, a calico clad country girl, even a lady from town with a wide hooped skirt and maybe one with a waist with "leg of mutton" sleeves. One man might be dressed in overalls, 3 another with a swallow tail coat and a dandy dude dressed in the latest fashion checkered suit, big tie, and sometimes a fancy colored vest.

It was a sight for sore eyes, all in one set, circling, bowing, and promenading.

The "necktie and apron" dance was a favorite here in our territory and aroused lots of interest. Both old and young took part. The women and girls would make up aprons and neckties each using a different pattern of gingham or other goods.

Each one necktie would correspond in pattern to one apron.

The neckties would be placed in envelopes along with a ticket to the dance.

The man and boys would buy these envelopes and the girl whose apron matched the tie would be the partner of that particular man for the dance.

The young folks and the old folks mingled freely together. There wasn't the distinction there is today. They were'nt cliquety at all. I think the older people are responsible for the way they do now. These young people wouldn't keep to themselves so much if they were encouraged by the older ones to all mix in the same crowd.

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Often when the sets were on the floor dancing both young and old, even some of the granddaddies who were not in any of the sets would get out to the side and dance a lively 'hoe down' or clog.

I have played at dances where five or six small children would be sleeping on a pile of the dancers' coats and wraps in a corner of the hall. 4 an old time Treatment for Cuts and Wounds Many a man has administered first aid by taking a chew of tobacco and applying it to the cut or bruise. Sometimes he used just plain wagon dope (axle grease) if nothing better was at hand.

Hard time dances were a show and a storm center of fun. Some of the 'get ups' were a scream. The girls wore ragged gunny sack dresses or just rags, and the men came dressed in tacky overalls, or flour sack smocks, straw hats with their hair sticking through, broken cowhide boots, some of them carried a bundle made of red bandana handkerchiefs, tied on a stick, tramp style.

Anyone who came dressed up in anyway was fined for it. A white collar was penalized to the full extent. Prizes were given to the ones, who wore the toughest, worst looking outfits.

We played at a number of watermelon dances. These were usually open air platforms dances and between all the watermelons, they wanted to eat and dancing, the crowd was kept pretty busy.

These were a customary summer celebration and most of them were free, no charge of any sort being made.

During the time William Jennings Bryan first run for President, we lived on a farm south of Col. Bransons, near Lincoln.

Father had an old horse named 'Jim' who seemed to favor father's politics. He was a Republican horse according to what happened.

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Several very strong Bryan men gathered there one day and were joshing father about the coming election and one of them declared that Bryan would be elected. They were standing near the barn and old 'Jim' overheard this remark. The next morning he was missed from his stall and nowhere in sight. A search was soon under way and 'Jim' was found dead in a neighbor's pasture. He had broke out of the barn and run through a barb wire fence and was cut so badly he died. The boys started the story that he was so disgusted at hearing about Bryan's coming election that he committed suicide. [Formal Gatherings?]

The 'Pop' Party (Farmers' Alliance) used to put on some big parades in Lincoln. We would load our organ onto a hayrack and the four of us, my father, brother, sister and myself would join the parades and play the campaign music and all the lively pieces of the day.

Lots of rigs of every description were entered, all decorated and made into floats representing about every line of industry and examples of its work. The workmen or laborer was shown with his dinner pail, either overflowing with food or empty with the bottom hanging loose. The farmer, the blacksmith, the merchant all rode on gayly decorated floats, even the fat saloon keeper was there leaning on a big barrel. The example of his work, so one minister said, was not shown. That was the drunken sot.

This call was always used to start off every quadrille: Balance and swing Alamand left Grand right and left Meet you partner and promenade.

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"Buffalo Gals" Tune Quadrille First lady swing with a right hand gent. The right hand around The right hand around Partner left with a left hand around Swing to the center And seven hands around

(Then)

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second lady swing, etc.

(through the call)

Third lady swing, etc.

(same call)

Fourth lady swing, etc.

(same call) Quadrille First couple lead to the right Four hands half around Right and left six Right and left back Lead to the next couple And Four hands half around Right and left through to the next couple. Four hands half around Right and left six, Then home.

[md] First couple promenade Around the outside Promenade to the center and six hands around

(then second couple, third couple and fourth couple to the same, always starting with (B) Balance and swing, etc. First four lead to the right Four hands half around And swing to a line All forward and back Forward again and right and left Forward and back And right and left back Four ladies chain Change right back Half promenade Right and left back

(then) (B) call and side couples lead to the right (etc. same as above) Promenade home.

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Grand March

Fall in by couples and once around the hall then down the center, one by one (single file.) Ladies to the right, men [to?] the left.

Then around and meet, then down center in couples, then one couple to the right, one to the left and around the hall again.

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Meet in fours, then down center by fours, then first four to the right, second four to the left.

Then around by fours and meet (center) in eights and down center by eights and that forms the quadrilles or sets of four couples. Quadrille Call Honor your partner Opposite lady too. Join hands and circle to the left Promenade back. First four forward and back Forward again and right and left Forward and back, right and left home. Ladies chain (hold hands) Change right back Half promenade Right and left back Balance all Swing your partner Alamand left

(call term meaning greet your opposite partner) Grand right and left All promenade.

Repeat Side four forward and back Forward again and right and left Right and left back Balance all and swing you partner Alamand left Grand right and left Meet your partner and promenade All four ladies lead to the right and swing. And on to the next and swing Home and swing your partner Alamand left, Grand right and left All four gents lead to the right and swing.

(so on until they get around home.)